**Sculpture Vocabulary**

**These sculpture terms will be on your final exam and used in the Sculpture Unit**

**Armature***:* A base that the *sculptor* uses to build up the sculpture in plaster, clay, or other materials. Armatures are generally made with a wrapped wire. For very large work, armatures are created with rigid durable materials. When sculpting a figure or standing animal, armatures are generally used for balance and support.

**Assemblage:**Creating sculpture by combining many elements-especially found objects-into a complete work of art. The work is "assembled" from many parts.

**Bisque or Bisque fire:**The first fire of ceramic clay. Bisque ware is generally unpainted clay that has been fired once.

**Cast:**To reproduce a piece of sculpture by means of a mold. The original piece is generally made of a less durable material than the cast.

**Maquette:**A small model usually in wax or clay of a larger sculpture work. The maquette is used to propose a large or monumental work to the client for approval before the major work is started.

**Mobile:**A balanced arrangement of thin rods or stiff wires with objects suspended from them. The entire sculpture hangs from a filament and is moved by air currents. The mobile was named by its inventor, sculptor Alexander Calder. The "stabile," also invented by Caldor, is rigid and stationary rather than flexible and suspended.

**Mold:**A hollow or negative container that gives its form to a substance poured into it. The substance, such as bronze, is allowed to harden to create a sculpture. A typical mold is made by coating an original clay or wax sculpture with plaster and removing the dry plaster piece, The mold is put back together and a substance is poured into the whole mold. Metal casting is done by sand casting. There is a negative mold and a positive core of foundry sand allowing the final cast to be hollow.

**Negative Space:** The empty space in and around an object the helps define the sculpture

**Ceramics-** Pottery or hollow clay sculpture fired at high temperatures in a kiln or oven to make them harder and stronger. Types include earthenware, porcelain, stoneware, and terra cotta.

**Clay -** Mud; moist, sticky dirt. In ceramics, clay is the basic material, usually referring to any of a certain variety of mixtures of such ingredients-- fine-grained, firm earthy material that is plastic when wet, brittle when dry, and very hard when heated. The most common types of ceramic clays are earthenware (terra cotta is an example), stoneware, and porcelain. Also, a hardening or non-hardening material having a consistency similar to clay, often called modeling clay or Plasticine .

**Composition-** The plan, placement or arrangement of the elements of art in a work. It is often useful to discuss these in reference to the principles of design, as well as to the relative weight of the composition's parts.

**Conceptual Art -** Art where the concept developed by the artist is more important than the finished product. Developed during the 1960's, conceptual art encompasses a broad range of activities including performance art.

**Construction -** A term referring to a sculpture made by joining together various components of various materials or of the same substance.

**Dadaism -** Began in Zurich during World War I. Dada espoused the theory that art happens by chance. As an art movement it was not sympathetic to traditional art movements. It ascribed aesthetic qualities to found objects.

**Elements of art or Elements of design -** The basic components used by the artist when producing works of art. Those elements are color, value, line, shape, form, texture, and space. The elements of art are among the literal qualities found in any artwork. Also see principles of design.

**Environmental Art -** related to assemblage; uses large elements that can be experienced by walking through and around. Environmental art frequently incorporated found objects as well as painting and sculpted forms.

**Found image, or found material, or found object -** An image, material, or object, not originally intended as a work of art, that is obtained, selected, and exhibited by an artist, often without being altered in any way. The Dadaists and surrealists originated the use of found images /materials / objects. Although it can be either a natural or manufactured image / material/object, the term readymade refers only to those which were manufactured. Also known in the French, object trouve.

**In the round or in-the-round -** To be viewed from all sides; freestanding. When referring to sculpture, a type that is surrounded on all sides by space. The opposite of relief.

**Patina:**A film or incrustation, usually green, that forms on copper and bronze after a certain amount of weathering and time. It is usually a result of the oxidation of the copper.

**Pop Art:**Forms and themes from mass culture. Pop artists looked at everyday objects and images as an art.

**Relief**:A sculpture in which the forms project from a flat background. A relief is usually

attached to the wall of a building. '

**Reference: Mayer, Ralph, *A Dictionary of Art Terms and Techniques.* NY: Thomas Crowell Co., 1969.**

**Sculpture Vocabulary from bttp://artlex.com/**

**Abstraction-** Imagery which departs from representational accuracy, to a variable range of possible degrees, for some reason other than verisimilitude. Abstract artists select and then exaggerate or simplify the forms suggested by the world around them. The paintings of Pablo Picasso (Spanish, 1881-1973) and Georges Braque (French, 1882-1963) as well as the sculptures of Henry Moore (English, 1898-1987), Barbara Hepworth (English, 1903-1975), and Jacques Lipchitz (Russian-American, 1891-1973) are examples of abstract art. Wassily Kandinsky, (Russian, 1866-1944), was one of the first creators of pure abstraction in modem painting. After successful avant-garde exhibitions, he founded the influential Munich group Der Blaue Reiter (The Blue Rider; 1911-1914), when his paintings became completely abstract. His forms evolved from fluid and organic to geometric and, finally, to pictographic.

**Armature -** A skeleton-like framework to give rigid internal support to a modeled sculpture, typically of either clay or wax. Armature wire used to build an armature is available in various gauges. A basic linear form in wire can be made with chicken wire or padded with wood or paper if appropriate. The medium is modeled directly onto the armature.

**Assemblage sculpture -** A three-dimensional composition made of various materials such as found objects, paper, wood, and textiles.

**Bust-** A portrait sculpture or a painting representing a person's head, neck, shoulders and upper chest, and perhaps the upper arms.

**Cast -** To form (molten metal, or liquid plaster or plastic, for example) into a three-dimensional shape by pouring into a mold; or something formed by this means. Also, an impression formed in a mold or matrix. Also see hollow casting, lost-wax casting, and statue

**Relief-** A type of sculpture in which form project from a background. There are three degrees or types of relief: high, low, and sunken. In high relief, the forms stand far out from the background.

In low relief (best known as bas-relief), they are shallow. In sunken relief, also called hollow or intaglio; the backgrounds are not cut back and the points in highest relief are level with the original surface of the material being carved

**Represent and representation -** To stand for; symbolize. To depict or portray subjects a

viewer may recognize as having a likeness; the opposite of abstraction. A representation is such a depiction.

**Sculpture-** A three-dimensional work of aft, or the art of making it. Such works maybe carved, modeled, constructed, or cast. Sculptures can also be described as assemblage, in the round, and relief, and made in a huge variety of media.

**Statue, statuette, and statuary -** A "statue" is a three-dimensional form of a person or animal sculpted, carved, modeled, or cast in any material, usually an entire figure, and especially when done in the round rather than in relief. "Statue" is not a synonym for "sculpture." Many other three-dimensional forms are considered sculptures than are considered statues. A "statuette" is a small statue. "Statuary" is a collective term for statues; a group of statues. It can refer to the art of making statues, and is also a rare term for a sculptor. "Statue" is related to such words as "statute," "stationery," "statistics," and even "destitute." The Latin word "status," meaning "position" or "state," is the source of these and other English words. Some terms of this family are directly related to "status," while others come to English through "statuere," a Latin verb from "status" that means "to set up." "Statuere" also gave us "constitute," "institute," and "restitution," among other similar-sounding words. The abbreviation for statue is stat.

**Subtractive -** An action which produces subtraction, or the removal of some materials. Often refers to carving. Materials especially appropriate [or subtractive sculpture in schools include clay, chalk, plaster, soft salt blocks, artificial sandstone, soap, and wax

**Surrealism -** developed during the 1920s to 1940s. Art was intended to free the viewer as well as the artist by exploring the world of the unconscious and subconscious mind. One of the many characteristics of Surrealism is an emphasis on minute detail.

**Three-dimensional-** Having, or appearing to have, height, width, and depth. Also see chiaroscuro, illusion, perspective, sculpture, statue, and two-dimensional.

**Material-** The substance or substances out of which something is or can be made. Examples include: clays, fibers, glass, papers, plastics, metals, pigments, stones, woods, etc. In body art the material might be the artist's body. In conceptual art there might be no material at all.

**Medium** - The material or technique used by an artist to produce a work of art. It may also refer to the vehicle or solvent with which powdered pigments are mixed to make paint of the proper consistency, many available with a matte, semi-gloss, or glossy finish. The plural form is media .

**Modeling or modelling** - A sculpture technique in which a three-dimensional form is manipulated in a soft material such as clay -- either modeling clay (Plasticine is a well-known brand) or ceramic clay -- or wax. The term also refers to the effect of light on a three­-dimensional form. The three-dimensional quality of such a form is emphasized by means of light, shadow, and color. Reproducing the effect of light, shadow, and color in a drawing of such a form makes it seem more realistic. For example, Masaccio (Italian, 1401-c. 1428) modeled the figures in his painting of *The Holy Trinity* to make them appear solid and round. Also see chiaroscuro, pinch, Prometheus, shape, and value.

**Mold** [American spelling] or **mould** [British spelling] - A hollow form created for shaping (casting) a fluid or plastic medium, such as clay, plaster, plastic or molten metal. In papermaking, the lower screen that holds the pulp (the upper frame is a deckle). Also see core, gelatin, hollow casting, investment, latex, lost-wax casting, mother mold, polyurethane, release agent, and silicone rubber

**Organic** - An irregular shape, or one that might be found in nature, rather than a regular, mechanical shape. Also see amorphous, concretion, and curve.

**Papier-mache or papier mache** - A material, made from paper pulp or shreds of paper mixed with resin, wallpaper paste, or flour and water (2: 1 by volume), which can be molded or modeled into various shapes when wet and becomes hard and suitable for painting and varnishing when dry. To slow mold in wallpaper paste or flour and water paste, add 3 tablespoons sugar per gallon. Other substitutes (less likely to mold or mildew) are white glue and water, liquid starch and water, and methyl-cellulose paste and water (one 2 oz. package per gallon of water). Also helping to retard spoilage is a teaspoon of salt per batch. Paper-mache's permanence is relative of course, but its light weight, minimal expense and the ease of its making recommend it for many uses. Celluclay is a powdered-paper product for making paper-mache. It's a French word, literally meaning chewed-paper. The equivalent Italian term is *carta pesta.* It is known to have been used for low reliefs in Italy in the fifteenth century, and was occasionally popular in Europe for ornamental furniture, etc. (pr. American: paper mah-shay', French: pah"pee-yay' mah-shay')

**Principles of design or principles of art** - Refers to the different ways that the elements of art may be used in a work of art. Artists "design" their works to varying degrees by controlling and ordering the elements of art. To do this, they use such principles as balance, coherence, emphasis (or dominance), eurythmy, harmony, horror vacui, interesting, movement, pattern, proportion, rhythm, unity, and variety.